

MSW LANDFILLS AND CAPACITY

At a Glance

MSW landfills
operating 26
under construction .. 6

MSW landfill capacity
years 17
tons 87 million

Closed landfills
number 56
with groundwater
monitoring 41
with contamination
..... 20

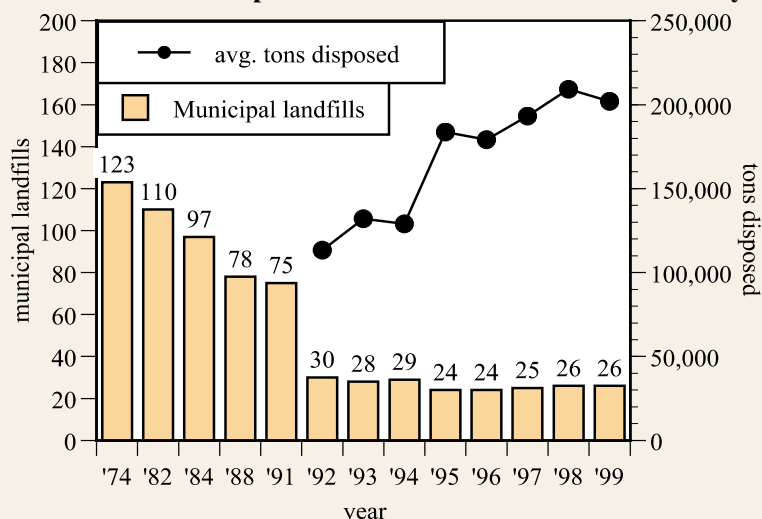
Indicator 2. Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Landfills and Capacity

Background Kentucky began regulating solid waste disposal in 1969. At that time there were hundreds of landfills and thousands of open dumps which posed public health and environmental threats. Solid waste issues moved to the forefront of the state's environmental agenda in 1987, after Kentucky was targeted for solid waste disposal by firms in the North-eastern United States, where landfill capacity was virtually nonexistent. This issue, combined with the fact that many landfills were leaking contaminants into ground and surface waters, led to the passage of a state law in 1991 to close substandard landfills, better plan and develop state-of-the-art landfills and ensure the proper disposal of solid waste.

Municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills are operated by private companies, cities, counties or groups of counties. In addition to the 26 active municipal solid waste landfills in Kentucky, construction permits have been approved for six more.

Goal Provide for the management and disposal of waste in a manner that will protect the public health and welfare; prevent the spread of disease and creation of nuisances, conserve our natural resources; enhance the beauty and quality of our environment; and encourage a regional approach to solid waste management.

Measure 1. Municipal Solid Waste Landfills in Kentucky



Progress Solid waste laws and regulations enacted in 1991 and 1992 have led to the closure of 56 of the state's 75 MSW landfills. These closed landfills must monitor groundwater for a two-year period and install a leachate collection system (a system to collect and treat liquids leaching from the landfill) if contamination is detected. Groundwater monitoring systems have been installed at 41 of the closed MSW landfills. Twenty have confirmed groundwater contamination.

Kentucky now has 26 state-of-the-art regional MSW landfills. These landfills must meet stringent construction and operating standards including plastic and clay composite liners (24 landfills) or double composite liners (2 landfills), leachate recovery and

the use of a comprehensive system to monitor groundwater for up to 75 different parameters. The 26 MSW landfills are permitted to provide for an estimated 17 years of capacity (approximately 87 million tons or 117 million cubic yards of air space).

The cost to dispose of a ton of waste at landfills (the tipping fee) has increased since the passage of the 1991 solid waste law, when stricter construction and operation standards for MSW landfills took effect. Trends reveal that tipping fees have leveled out during the past four years (1996-1999).

Measures - notes and sources

Measure 1. Contained permitted municipal solid waste landfills. Source: Ky. Division of Waste Management.

Measure 2. Source: National Solid Waste Management Association, Ky. Division of Waste Management.

Measure 2. Average MSW Landfill Tipping Fees in Ky.

Year	Tipping Fee (per ton)
1993	\$21.69
1994	\$23.49
1995	\$24.43
1996	\$27.49
1997	\$27.50
1998	\$27.90
1999	\$26.44